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ABSTRACT

A revitalized role of educational planning is called for in order to make education systems effective instruments for social change. This trend is persuasively articulated in the movement for educational reform currently engaging governments in several Asian countries. This booklet is an attempt to give an observer's personal assessment of the function and role of educational planning in the developing Asian countries within the last 3 decades. Educational planning is seen in the way it is carried out in the actual conditions and in the way it is embodied in plans intended for implementation. Specific countries are not dealt with on an individual basis, as the emphasis is on identifying the general trends and problems. The names of specific countries are used, however, to illustrate various points in the general framework of educational planning. A Brief history of education and educational objectives is followed by a review of the first planning mechanisms introduced in Asia. The contribution of educational planning and the problems associated with it are evaluated. The final section gives an analysis of the roles of reforms in the future of Asia's educational planning. (118 references) (LAP)

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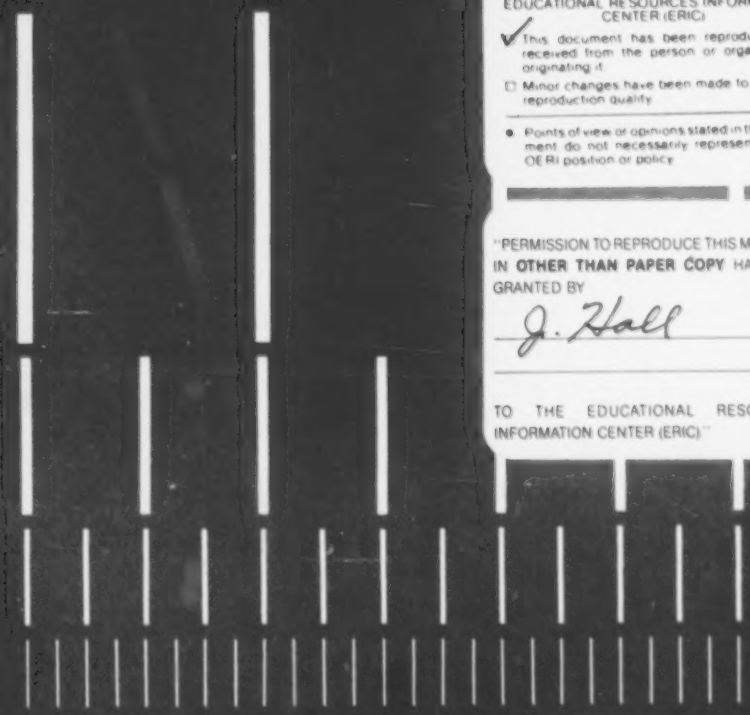

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Educational planning in Asia

Raja Roy-Singh

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Fundamentals of educational planning

The booklets in this series are written primarily for two types of clientele: those engaged in—or preparing for—educational planning and administration, especially in developing countries; and others, less specialized, such as senior government officials and policy-makers who seek a more general understanding of educational planning and of how it is related to overall national development. They are devised to be of use either for private study or in formal training programmes.

Since this series was launched in 1967 the practice as well as the concept of educational planning have undergone substantial change. Many of the assumptions which underlay earlier attempts to put some rationality into the process of educational development have been abandoned or at the very least criticized. At the same time, the scope of educational planning itself has been broadened. In addition to the formal system of schools, it now includes other important educational efforts in non-formal settings and among adults. Attention to the growth and expansion of educational systems is being supplemented and sometimes even replaced by a growing concern for the distribution of educational opportunities and benefits across different regions and across social, ethnic and sex groups. Educational planners and administrators are concerned to take a more systematic attitude towards their social responsibilities. They are learning to act as 'conveyor belts' between the classroom (or any other place of learning) and the decision-maker, whether he be found at the local or regional level, at the head of a central department or institution, or in one of its various branches. Their concern is twofold: to have a better understanding of the reality of education, in its own specific dimensions, empirically observed; and to ensure better analysis and consideration of this reality so as to

improve, where possible, the hypotheses that underlie educational policies and strategies for change.

One of the purposes of these booklets is to reflect this diversity by giving different authors, coming from a wide range of backgrounds and disciplines, the opportunity to express their ideas and to communicate their experience on various aspects of changing theories and practices in educational planning.

Although the series has been carefully planned, no attempt has been made to avoid differences or even contradictions in the views expressed by the authors. The Institute itself does not wish to impose any official doctrine on any planner. Thus, while the views are the responsibility of the authors and may not always be shared by Unesco or the IIEP, they are believed to warrant attention in the international forum of ideas.

Since readers will vary so widely in their backgrounds, the authors have been given the difficult task of introducing their subjects from the beginning, explaining technical terms that may be commonplace to some but a mystery to others, and yet adhering to scholarly standards. This approach will have the advantage, it is hoped, of making the booklets optimally useful to every reader.

Preface

This booklet is an observer's personal account of the role and functioning of educational planning in the countries of the Asian region. Based on his wide-ranging experience and involvement in the development of the educational planning process in the countries of the region, Raja Roy-Singh, former Director of the Unesco Regional Office at Bangkok, describes the beginnings, the changing priorities, and the new directions of educational planning in Asia.

Though countries in Asia have long traditions in education, educational planning is a relatively recent phenomenon—consequent upon the adoption of planning as a basic framework for economic and social development in the region over the past three decades. Yet educational planning has already become a vital tool in the development of institutional mechanisms and administrative structures, thereby facilitating the unprecedented quantitative expansion of education. It has also helped in evolving coherent and self-sustaining national systems of education. As a result, the process and pattern of educational planning in the different countries have become more homogeneous and comparable over the years.

According to the author, the pattern of educational planning in the Asian countries can be grouped into three types: (i) educational planning as an integral part of the national development plan; (ii) educational planning developed separately but within the quidelines determined by national development plans; and (iii) educational planning expressed as a set of policy decisions and consequent action plans. Irrespective of the differences in patterns, the priorities of educational planning in Asian countries continue to be the universalisation of primary education, the vocationalisation of secondary

education, the diversification of post-secondary education and improvement in the quality of education.

The countries of the region have recently begun heading towards a movement for educational reforms based on a fundamental re-orientation of educational content and methods to suit the changing needs of society. Decentralisation and participatory planning seem to be the major concerns of educational planning strategy in Asia for the coming years.

The IIEP is delighted that Mr. Raja Roy-Singh has tackled the difficult task of identifying the similarities and differences in the educational planning process in the different countries of the Asian region. The booklet, however, goes further; it provides clear indications regarding the future direction of educational planning in the Asian region. I sincerely hope that it will be of considerable use not only to educational planning practitioners but also to the general public at large.

Jacques Hallak
Director, IIEP

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I. Introduction

The post-Second World War period witnessed an expansion of educational systems all over the world. Asian countries experienced unprecedented quantitative expansion of their educational systems during this period. These countries also developed in this period educational systems with self-sustaining capacities. Educational planning within the framework of development planning has been one of the influencing factors in these developments. The expansion of education in the developing Asia in the period from about 1950 to the present bears out the magnitude of the national efforts: in 1950, the total number of students at all levels was about 85 million; by 1985 it was about 480 million—that is, 395 million additional education places were created in the period of about one generation, involving outlays of considerable human and financial resources. The financial resources provided to support these developments would by any measure be totally inadequate if they had not been supplemented by the mobilization of other resources, notably people's participation. Thus, despite the scale of expansion, the cost per unit of enrolled pupil was held in balance in Asia and is among the lowest in the world—and is also reflected in the share of educational expenditure in public revenues.

While all countries in Asia shared in this phenomenal increase in enrolment, the progress was sharply uneven in different countries at the same development stage. Some countries were able to deal effectively with the problem of creating mass education systems; in a few countries educational attainment is rather low. These countries in the Asian region account for nearly 60 per cent of the illiterates of the world. Some estimates show that this share is likely to increase in the coming years. There is a considerable amount of non-enrolment

of children in these countries. Added to this is the mounting problem of drop-out, repetition and wastage, especially at the primary level of education. Moreover, in the region as a whole there are disparities in the distribution of educational facilities between different geographical regions and between different segments of population. The need for qualitative improvement of the educational systems has now become urgent. All these problems underline the need for further strengthening the planned efforts in educational development so as to ensure equity in the provision of educational facilities and efficiency and quality in the delivery system.

Organizational arrangements of one kind or another were set up for educational planning in almost all countries. However, the role and functions of educational planning were very narrowly defined. The objectives of the initial educational plans included both quantitative expansion and qualitative change. In effect, however, quantitative expansion dominated all other efforts. Even significant educational reforms perceived to be desirable by the policy-makers and indeed necessitated by the quantitative changes themselves did not make much headway in many countries.

Both the Asian achievements and the Asian shortfalls offer useful lessons for the future development of educational planning. Many of the problems in the education systems (which comprise both formal and non-formal structures) stem from the disequilibria inherent in the dynamics of development. Every change introduced in the education system creates an imbalance in relation to the other existing factors in educational situations. Readjustments must be made till the change element is assimilated in the system by raising the system to a higher level of effectiveness. Fresh initiatives for change then become necessary to set the process of development in motion. The tasks of educational planning in the developing countries thus increase in complexity, having to deal simultaneously with the continuing momentum of expansion and the needed reorientations and qualitative changes in the education systems. This calls for planning approaches and methods based on education reform policies for qualitative changes rather than technical exercises in model building.

With compelling changes in the context of education, a revitalized role of educational planning is called for in order to make education systems effective instruments for social change. These trends are persuasively articulated in the movement for educational reform currently engaging governments in several Asian countries.

This booklet is an attempt to give an observer's personal assessment of the role and functioning of educational planning in the developing Asian countries in the last three decades or so. Educational planning is seen in the way it is carried out in the actual conditions and embodied in plans intended for implementation. The assessment presented here is necessarily general. The emphasis is on identifying the trends and problems and hence it does not attempt to deal with the problems specific to individual countries. Needless to add, issues which are common in the majority of countries are taken into account while formulating an agenda of issues in Chapter IV. Some 'sketches' drawn from the experiences of individual countries have been cited to underline a point or illustrate an argument. Limitation of space has unfortunately not permitted more extensive citings of all Asian countries or more detailed sketches.

The views and opinions expressed in this booklet are those of the author. He would, however, like to place on record the profound debt of gratitude he owes to the educational authorities, planners, scholars and educators of Asian countries for the opportunities provided to him to be closely in touch with the developments in education in these countries during the two decades and more of his working in Asia. In the preparation of this booklet he has received help which he would like especially to acknowledge, with appreciation, from Dr Minda C. Sutaria (Philippines), Dr Yung-dug Lee (Republic of Korea), Mr Sterling Perera (Sri Lanka), Dr Iraj Ayman and Mr F. Djaka (Unesco, Bangkok). For the data on Japan, grateful acknowledgement is made to the writings of Mr Hiroshi Kida, especially those on Japanese educational reports, and documentation generously made available to the author by Mr Toshio Kanaya of the National Institute for Educational Research, Tokyo.

II. Planning and education in Asia: background

The beginning of planning

A striking feature of the developments in Asian countries in the years following the Second World War has been the adoption of planning as the basic framework for their economic and social development. This is reflected in the five-year plan documents brought out by these countries from the mid-1950s onwards. These plans vary in their objectives, methodologies and operational strategies. The countries were attempting to evolve mechanisms of planning adapted to their own specific situations. The situation of underdevelopment impelled them towards a comprehensive and integrated approach rather than a piecemeal approach to planning.

The idea of planning in the developing Asia (and in other developing regions of the world) has from the beginning carried an emotional charge which links it integrally with the aspirations for social, economic and political reforms. In this view, planning is more than a mere technique or an operational principle or a model neutral in commitments. It is an instrument for improving the quality of life and for building up a social framework in which the broader societal purposes could be progressively realized.[1] This broader view of socio-economic

1. The following quotation may be taken as illustrating the opposite view: 'Planning is concerned with the setting up of an effective system for utilizing resources to their best advantage to serve given ends. *Thus the planner is primarily concerned with the problems of means rather than ends, and is required to engage in exercises of quantification, in the study of consistencies between goals, and in organizing the achievement of specific targets*' (emphasis added), *Economic and social aspects of educational planning*, Paris, Unesco, 1964, pp. 11–12.

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planning has continued to provide the rationale for successive medium- and long-term plans in the developing Asian countries and has also helped generally in keeping the planning process from degenerating into formalistic model-building activity.

The need to adopt planning as the basic framework for economic development arose from the specific situation existing in the Asian region in the 1950s. First, all Asian countries, with the exception of Japan, were 'developing' countries with a predominant agriculture sector and were exporters of primary products. With the exception of two or three countries which had not been colonized, the Asian countries had only recently won their political independence after a prolonged period of colonial domination. The upsurge of nationalism which had shaped and energized the political struggle for freedom now charged the efforts of the new sovereign countries in shaping their national policies. Compulsions of rapid economic growth and powerful national aspirations prompted the new developing nations to adopt planning as the basic framework for national development policies.

Second, the existence of a vast expanse of poverty among the mass of the people and the limited public resources necessitated rational prioritization and optimal use of resources. Associated with the poverty of the people were socially inherited rigidities and inequalities which blunted the spirit of enterprise. This realization of economic and social poverty and deprivation was surely a major premise from which arose the planning initiatives in developing Asia. Urgency was added to the need for planning by the accelerating population growth rates in the Asian countries, which became evident by the 1950s.

Third, in countries which were for a long time under colonial subjection, planning was seen as an indispensable means of promoting national cohesion. It was envisaged that planning could mitigate economic and social inequalities, create greater opportunities for the people, giving them a sense of collective achievement, and draw them in as active participants in the developmental process. Thus planning was seen as much a part of the political and social reconstruction as an economic instrument.

Fourth, it was recognized from the beginning that planning could have a crucial role in the functioning of the government and in the evolution of coherent and effective public administration. It was a means of co-ordinating government policies in different sectors and at different levels of administration. Hence the entire government machinery could be involved in the planning process. What was more

important, preparation and implementation of plans became one of its main functions. At present the impact of planning is nowhere more clearly visible than in the evolution of government machinery in the developing countries of Asia.

In the earlier stage, the scope and time horizon of a plan were experimental. For example, the first flights of plans were narrowly focused on the economic parameters and they varied in their time horizon from four years or five years to eight years. This phase was replaced quite soon by plans of broader approach encompassing both economic and social goals. Moreover, five-year plans became the standard framework and annual plans became the operating instruments for budgetary and other operational purposes in all developing countries of Asia.

Setting up of planning bodies

The central role that the governments accorded to development planning was signalled by the establishment of high-powered bodies in the machinery of government, with overarching authority in planning. Typically the planning bodies are headed by the prime minister or a high-ranking minister. In most countries the apex planning bodies were set up during the period between 1950 and 1965. For example, the Economic Planning Agency in the Prime Minister's Office in Japan, the Central Planning Agency in Indonesia, the Planning Commission in India, the Economic Planning Board in the Republic of Korea, the Planning Commission in Pakistan, the National Development Planning Committee in Malaysia and the National Economic Development Board in Thailand were set up during this period.

The establishment of an apex planning body with overall responsibility for co-ordinating government policies in all developing sectors and articulating them for action in a five-year plan has determined decisively the nature and mode of planning in individual developing sectors. The planning body is, of course, subject to the political and constitutional controls of the respective country. It makes use of the channels of internal consultations with concerned development departments in preparing the plan. It is, however, principally responsible for 'prioritizing' the goals of a development plan and allocating resources to them. These two functions—assignment of priorities and

allocation of resources—which are rightly considered to form the hard core of planning are in fact and in real situations not to be found in a development department (education or agriculture, etc.) but in the planning and/or finance bodies of the government machinery.

This is not to deny the role played by sectors like education in preparing educational plans. While the national-level planning decides on the overall priorities and intersectoral allocation of resources, sectoral priorities and intrasectoral allocation of resources in education are generally decided by educational planning.

The educational tradition in Asia

The context in which the planning of education occurs seems to be much more influential than other factors in determining its nature, scope and processes, and certainly its tasks. Countries in Asia have had long traditions in education going back many centuries, mainly though not exclusively expressed and transmitted through institutions of religion. Beginning from the last quarter of the nineteenth, and notably, in the first half of the twentieth century, the traditional forms and institutions of education began to decline. In countries under colonial rule the decline was precipitous. The modern education introduced during this period did not flourish and the traditional native systems of education perished in many of the countries. Thus an educational vacuum was created which spanned a few decades in some countries and several decades in others.

The different colonial powers followed different policies in education but one feature was common, namely their neglect of mass primary education and adult illiteracy. In some countries the emphasis was on higher education and general secondary education and these were developed on a poorly developed base of primary education. In most others, underdevelopment at one stage of education matched that at other stages. There were different kinds of educational institutions but there were no national educational systems as such.

In the 1950s, when planning began, the development of education entailed a twofold task. First, it called for development of coherent and self-sustaining systems through the provision of educational opportunities. Second, it called for the transformation of the systems into national systems of education, adapted to the national ethos, needs and aspirations. Such a transformation was important, because

the educational goals and aims in most of the Asian countries were shackled to models unrelated to the changed national needs. The development of education in 'mental chains' could only provide derivative and not self-sustaining development.

The response to this twofold task in educational development varied from country to country. The functions and processes of educational planning reflected in a quite significant way how the task of development-cum-transformation was viewed in each country. This is dealt with in Chapter III, which considers the evolution of educational plans and planning mechanisms in the countries of the Asian region.

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III. Educational planning and the evolution of planning mechanisms

The beginning of educational planning in Asia

Educational planning in one form or another is now quite well established in all the countries of Asia. In the initial phases its relation to socio-economic development plans has been different in different countries. In some countries the first plans for educational development were anterior to the economic development plans. Indeed, the classic example of a master plan for education (long before the term educational planning was coined) is the educational reform initiated in Japan in 1872 following the Meiji Restoration, which became the springboard for the modernization processes in Japan. In India, the Central Advisory Board for Education prepared an educational development plan covering a period of four decades (1944–84) and published it for public debate in 1944. In several countries the first educational-planning activities emerged about the same time that economic planning caught policy-making attention. In other countries, educational planning arose directly out of the economic-planning stimulus. However, with the emergence of five-year planning, overall economic development and educational development became more closely linked and educational planning came to be looked upon as a means for advancing the development of education and also to link such development to the economic and social goals.

Time frame for educational plans

Since educational planning in Asian countries is derived from the national development planning, the time horizon of the educational

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plans has been determined by that of the development plans, namely a five-year pattern. By the mid-1960s this pattern had established itself with notable uniformity in the developing countries of Asia, and has remained unchanged. In several countries, however, medium-term planning of education was supplemented by long-term prospecting—a procedure more in accord with the longer time horizons needed both for the development of education and for its leavening influence to make themselves felt in the economic, social and political fields. The Republic of Korea offers a good example.

Since the early 1970s the Republic of Korea has developed long-range perspective educational plans forming one axis of the five-year educational plan. The other axis of the educational plan was provided by the national economic development plans. Based on a series of assumptions about the prospects of overall national development and analysis of the critical areas in educational development, the first Long-Range Comprehensive Educational Plan (1972–86) set targets for the qualitative and quantitative transformation of education. The first Five-Year Educational Development Plan (1972–76) and the second Five-year Educational Development Plan (1977–81) were both formulated within the framework envisaged in the Long-Range Plan. In implementation, however, the shortfall in the resources actually available for the five-year education plans necessitated a revision of the long-range perspectives. This had been done in the two succeeding prospecting plans: the Long-term Prospects for Educational Development (1978–91) and Korean Education 2000 (1988–2001).

In these long-range plans there has been an attempt to move away from exclusive reliance on quantitative projections and simulation-modelling techniques. Experience has shown repeatedly that the longer the time frame of the projections the greater the certainty of their being off the mark. (This was demonstrated rather dramatically in the Indonesian experience when a painstakingly prepared fifteen-year Master Plan of Education was rendered obsolete almost overnight by drastic changes in the economy.) Subsequently, the emphasis in the long-range planning has been shifted from the quantitative projection exercises to the provision of future perspectives on the desirable changes in the goals, objectives and development of education.

The other tier in the planning time frame has been the annual plan, which, like the five-year plan, is common procedure in all Asian countries. If the five-year planning for education has tended to be

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dominated by the economic planning agency, the annual planning has been more the responsibility of the ministry of education. In some cases it tends to become just a fiscal allocation or a passive exercise at disaggregating quantitative targets; at its best it links the planning process to programmes and implementation, underlining planning as a continuing process of decision and action. At times of drastic changes in resource availabilities (such as occurred in the 1970s following the oil crisis), the annual plans have made possible quick changes of course and adjustments which otherwise could not be handled in a five-year plan frame.

The planning objectives

Economic planning in the developing countries of Asia was shaped and determined by the situation of their underdevelopment (as was pointed out earlier). This is equally true of educational planning.

The experience of educational planning in the diverse contexts of the Asian countries underlines the fact that the planning process cannot be constrained to any one single objective. Concepts such as the social-demand approach or the manpower approach or education-as-an-industry approach have been useful as analytical tools but no educational plan can be based entirely on any single approach. An educational plan is a mix of objectives and one of the tasks of the planning action is to strengthen interdependencies among the objectives and reconcile incompatibilities.

The objectives common to all the educational plans in developing Asia through all the five-year planning periods centre on the expansion of educational opportunities, meeting the manpower requirements of economic growth, development of the national education systems and structural changes therein and qualitative improvement of the education processes and outcomes. The objectives are interrelated but the relative significance of individual objectives varies from one five-year plan to another.

Apparent versus invisible objectives. The objectives, whether explicitly stated or inferred from the proposed action, are not always a true index of a plan. Because of different and more often than not opposing forces, an educational plan is not always what it seems. The 'apparent' plan sets out the objectives and how they are proposed to

be achieved. An 'invisible' plan begins on its own to unfold in the process of implementing the apparent plan. Any analysis of educational plans over a period of time has to take account of the possibility of a divergence between the apparent objectives and actual accomplishments of a plan.

A revealing example to show the divergence between the 'apparent' and the 'invisible' plan is that of provision of education to all children. Though this was the announced objective in all educational plans, it has not been realized in some countries, notably because of the opposing pulls for increasing investments in higher education. The 'apparent' educational plans, in the successive five-year plan documents, have stressed the objective of providing universal primary education and also of preparing high-level technical and scientific manpower for economic development. Because of the existing education system's predisposition in these countries to higher education, it is the second objective that has formed the 'invisible' agenda in the process of resource allocation and implementation. Consequently, contrary to the text of the plan documents, the provisions for universal primary education have become a lower priority programme in reality.

Economic versus social objectives. It is perhaps no more than incidental to suggest that the economic aspects of education attract attention more readily in industrialized societies with stabilized education systems, while in the developing societies the social functions of education provide the driving force for developing their education systems. This latter role of education has been strikingly pre-eminent in some countries in Asia, especially those which are 'plural societies' and are divided racially or linguistically or by deeply entrenched social stratifications. These divisions become socially erosive when they are compounded by economic inequalities and deprivation. In some countries, therefore, the promotion of national unity and the strengthening of the integrative forces in national life became the overarching goals of development policies. In education, this has meant a rapid expansion of educational opportunities at all levels and in all types of education in order to resolve inequalities, even of adopting measures of affirmative action in favour of deprived population groups. The educational plan of Malaysia illustrates educational planning tasks set by such a context.

When Malaysia gained political independence in 1957 it inherited a school system which replicated, and thereby served to perpetuate,

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linguistic and ethnic divisions. The grossly uneven distribution of educational opportunities between the rural areas and the urban townships sharpened these divisions. With a narrow base of primary education (which was therefore weighted in favour of urban townships), few technical-education facilities, a totally inadequate teacher-training system and no superstructures of higher education, the educational system in its state of underdevelopment was not only not capable of serving all-round national development, it might even have been a contributory source of divisive tendencies in the polity. The educational plans in addressing these problems were linked to overall reform of education, which in turn was seen as inseparable from the purposes of nation-building. The primary-school enrolment rate, which was about 30 per cent around 1947, rose to 95 per cent in less than two decades, with the major increase taking place in the rural areas; within the first two five-year plans, a complete teacher-training system and a technical-education system were developed and a higher-education structure comprising three universities and a range of post-secondary institutions was created. Another example in a different context is provided by the experience of Indonesia. The massive popular movements, in the 1950s, which raised the primary-education enrolment rate from about 15 per cent to 60 per cent and the adult-literacy rate to 60–65 per cent within a decade, were triggered by an overall national purpose which was reflected in the emergence in a multi-language situation of one national language (Bahasa).

The strengthening of national cohesion and integrative forces has been a profound concern in most developing countries in Asia. Quite clearly, a variety of factors—economic, political, social, cultural—and not only education, have to be brought into play in national policies which aim at the goal of national unity. However, in those countries which have been able to achieve a substantial degree of fundamental transformation, the role of education has proved to be pivotal and has called for educational planning skills and sensitivities well beyond those implied in a technical and 'neutral' exercise. Moreover, what is true of educational planning in the specific context of the goal of national unity is equally true in relation to other basic problems which uniquely arise from the state of underdevelopment.

Primary versus higher education. In the expansion goal, primary education was 'prioritized' in all educational plans, representing the

powerful new social aspirations at work towards greater social equalities and the economic opportunities. In several countries these social and economic inequalities were perpetuated by a two-track system of primary (and post-primary) education which provided two types of schools and curricula—one for a small group of pupils who would be expected to proceed to the next level of education and the other for 'other' pupils for whom the primary was to be a terminal stage. (The widespread opposition to the two-track system is an index of the strength of the social forces which were shaping the post-war decades in Asia.)[1]

In the 1940s and early 1950s enrolment ratios in primary education in most of the developing countries in Asia were clustered in the range of 30–40 per cent (the Philippines and Sri Lanka with higher ratios and Afghanistan and Laos with lower ratios were exceptions to this general trend). It is instructive to observe how the Asian countries approached the problem of universalizing primary education in the educational-planning process.

The educational plans of the countries disclose broadly two differing planning strategies. A majority of countries focused their early planning efforts massively on securing a rapid and extensive expansion of primary education (linked, in several countries, with an enhancement of the rate of adult literacy). Though educational planning covered all levels and types of education in a systemic approach, the primary level was treated as a leading sector. The other planning strategy adopted in a few countries which also had quite low primary enrolment ratios and high rates of adult illiteracy was aimed at 'a balanced development of the education system'. This in effect held in check the expansion of primary education while secondary and higher levels of education (with outputs perceived as more directly related to the economy) were allowed to expand at an accelerating rate. The effect of the planning procedures was one of restraining mass primary education by lowering resources allocation.

The countries which adopted the strategy of massive expansion of primary education were able to realize the goal well within the first two decades, with enrolment ratios within sight of universality and rising adult-literacy rates. The important role of planning in a

1. This is not to say that the two-track system is now a thing of the past. It comes back again and again in various guises; for example, short-cycle 'basic' education, shortened instructional time programmes, etc.

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dynamic situation such as this one is not limited just to 'the economic use of available resources', it also lies—and this is equally important—in tapping and mobilizing new resources. The countries which realized their goal were able to do so through innovative mobilization and use of resources.

A striking example is the People's Republic of China. In 1950, China had an enrolment ratio of 25 per cent with 24 million pupils enrolled at the primary level. In order to expand the basic educational opportunities in the shortest time and at the lowest cost, educational functions were decentralized and in primary education the local community became the locus of planning and resource support. The remarkable educational growth, notably at the primary level, that followed the decentralization policy changed the educational scene in the most populous country in the world. Within three decades, enrolment at primary level rose to 134 million pupils (an enrolment ratio of about 94 per cent) and adult literacy to 65–70 per cent.

General versus technical education. The other common focal area in the educational plans was the development of technical-technological education. No developing country in Asia had in the 1940s more than very rudimentary facilities for technical education. These facilities had to be developed quite rapidly to meet the needs for skilled manpower of the industrializing economies.

In the educational plans this was the most direct and explicit link between educational development and economic planning. It also introduced into educational planning a greater range of quantitative techniques that included the forecasting of demand for a variety of skills at different levels and of different configurations. By the 1970s most of the countries could justifiably claim that they could broadly meet the demand for technical personnel.

A persistent problem remains, however, arising from the fact that the technical-education system showed the same propensity for unbalanced growth as the general-education system, namely, over-investment at degree and other higher levels and underinvestment at other levels. Hence the middle range of skills was inadequately developed. The advance in industrialization achieved by many Asian countries in the last two decades (and the achievement in some countries has been truly remarkable) owes much to the technical education and training systems, which were developed almost from scratch.

General secondary education and higher education have had a high rate of expansion. Much of it was a response (in some countries, almost a passive response) to the social demand, but the planning intervention in several countries was directed to redistributing the facilities for secondary education to the rural areas. A country's map by location of educational facilities would be almost unrecognizably different in 1980 from what it was in 1960. The wider dispersion of educational facilities geographically reinforces the questions what kind of education and for whom, questions which at the secondary level and higher level have continued to elude easy catch-all answers. The example of Thailand's planning experience is illustrative.

Thailand as far back as the 1930s developed a broad base of primary education. Its secondary education was however highly selective. In the mid-1960s, for example, almost 65 per cent of secondary enrolment was in the schools in the capital, Bangkok. All higher-education institutions were also located in the capital city. Beginning with the second National Economic and Social Development Plan (1967–71), rural development with education as a crucial element has been given high priority. Under three successive five-year plans, secondary schools, teacher-training institutions and regional universities were established in the countryside with the result that by the beginning of the fifth Five-Year Plan (1982–86), the earlier imbalances in the distribution of educational facilities between the urban and rural areas had been corrected to an appreciable extent. What is more important, secondary schools, teachers' colleges and regional universities orientated specifically to the needs of their regions have been instrumental in serving not only the educational but also the economic, social and cultural needs of their communities.

Similar developments, especially at the secondary level, fostered by the educational plans occurred in other countries also; Malaysia and Indonesia, among others, are examples. By and large, this was quantitative expansion and did not effect any significant reorientation of general secondary and higher education. Better balance in the geographical distribution of these facilities did open educational opportunities to population groups which were hitherto without access, but once the minimum threshold had been reached, the basic problems of general secondary and higher education asserted themselves on a magnified scale.

The establishment and growth of technical and vocational education could have been expected to bring about some modifications in the

character of general secondary education, but since the rate of enrolment increase in general secondary and higher education was much faster than the rate of increase in technical and vocational education this did not occur. Lack of effective and adequate diversification at the secondary level and insufficiencies in qualitative performance have combined to make secondary and higher education a persistent problem in many developing countries of Asia.

In some countries the supply of skilled personnel has fallen seriously short of the demand of developing economies; in other countries the problem of 'educated unemployed' has become a major concern. The maladjustment between the educational system and the realities and needs of the economy finds further confirmation in the knowledge that the countries which have the problem of 'educated unemployed' continue to have also shortages in important categories and levels of skills.

Many of the causes of 'educated unemployed' have their origin in circumstances outside the direct influence of education systems; underperformance of the economy and rigidities of economic control mechanisms are some of the causes of educated unemployment. There however remain enough grounds to indicate a basic imbalance between the functioning of the secondary and tertiary levels of education in quality and effectiveness, and the broad range of national development needs. The educational reforms being formulated currently in several countries address urgent qualitative and structural changes in secondary and tertiary levels of education.

Institutional structures

Along with the expansion of educational facilities, the educational plans created the institutional structures which made the education system in each country a viable concern in terms of the capacity of the system to meet its trained-manpower needs and to sustain its future growth. Apart from institutions such as universities and teacher-education centres, several countries developed high-level scientific research institutions and R&D (research and development) organizations. Non-formal education in both forms, as pioneering innovation and as a passing fad, has received much attention and new types of learning venues ranging from community-based literacy units to 'open' universities are growing apace. Educational plans now

potentially have a much wider reach than the earlier plans could claim. Furthermore the organizational control and administration of education which in the past was fragmented are now much more unified as a direct result of the planning experiences. Building an education system together with its institutional structures and their articulation does not necessarily ensure that the societal development is advanced. There is some validity in the statement that it is easier to build a modern education system than a modern society. The system is but an instrument: what kind of education, by what processes, for whom—these basic issues remain for educational planning as much as for national development policies.

Evolution of educational planning mechanisms

The organizational form of educational planning is determined mainly by the political and constitutional structure of the country and its general machinery of government. At the initial stage, educational planning was treated as a function of general educational administration. The planning functions in education in all countries were dispersed among various organs of administration. However, a substantial number of functions are now centred in the ministries of education. With the experience of developing the first few plans, the need became apparent to establish a suitable organizational mechanism for educational planning which would embody the insights and skills that planning uniquely calls for, notably the capability of taking an overall and integrated view of the education system. Functions relating to the allocation of financial resources, especially public revenues, estimation of manpower needs, determination of wage/salary structures and similar governmental operations are ascribed to organs other than the ministry of education.

Within the ministry of education the distribution and allocation of responsibilities to various departments are largely the result of historical evolution and determine the organization by levels of education (elementary, secondary, technical, etc.) and by types of service provided (textbooks, examinations, curriculum, etc.). Horizontal co-ordination among the operating departments is indispensable for both the formulation and the implementation of an education plan.

Higher education, particularly that of the universities, presents a

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special feature. By law or by established tradition, universities are autonomous, especially with regard to their admission policies, standards and courses of study. An educational plan, if it is more than a mere projection of trends, carries necessarily a regulatory element that may well impinge on areas of activity which are sedulously guarded by university autonomy. This situation is complicated further in countries which have universities with different funding and control systems: state universities, private universities, religious or denominational universities. Different methods (e.g. university grants commissions, special boards for universities, etc.) are in use in Asian countries, with an uneven record of success, to articulate the priorities of higher education in an overall educational plan. In a growing number of countries higher education has become a focal point of concern, accentuated by a feeling that the model handed down from an earlier, more spacious age of 'universities that are never to be planned or managed' is no longer relevant to the compulsions of developing countries.

There is yet another line of authority and responsibility—the governmental organizations below the central level reaching down to school districts. In all except geographically small countries, this vertical line comprises two or at times three levels below the centre. It is at these levels that educational plans become concrete, relating to people and communities, opening doors or barring them. In countries with a federal constitution, the constituent state and/or provincial governments may have almost full responsibility for education. Even in a unitary structure of government, local bodies and prefectures have a significant role in education. The nature of an overall educational plan derives very much from the way the agencies in the vertical line have participated in the making of it; in the implementation of a plan their role is crucial.

Then there is a rapidly expanding range of specialized sources of knowledge which are particularly important to the planning of education. For example, most Asian countries have in recent years established special institutions/organizations, generally under the economic planning agency, for manpower studies. Organizations for scientific R&D are operational in all countries; in some countries separate ministries for science and technology development have been established. Likewise programmes for upgrading the skills of the working population which cut across the usual departmental boundaries (ministries of labour, public works, agriculture, industry, etc.)

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have added new dimensions to general planning as well as educational planning.

Based on the Asian experience, one can observe that the educational-planning organizations have played a significant role in 'operationalizing' educational plans and were to a considerable extent determining factors in educational development. Consequently, the effectiveness and importance of educational-planning organizations are increasingly recognized in the Asian countries. This can be seen from their evolution in different countries.

The organizational mechanisms for educational planning evolved differently in different countries. The relationships that existed between the economic planning agency, the operating departments of the ministry of education and agencies in the states/provinces, regions or prefectures were important factors in shaping these organizational mechanisms.

Educational planning mechanisms: some examples

The following sketch reports are intended to sample the range of the organizational mechanisms as they have been evolving in Asian countries.

India. India developed its first plan in 1950, covering a period of five years (1951–56). However, it was only with the second five-year plan (1956–61) that a comprehensive and integrated approach to planning evolved. The Planning Commission, in co-operation with the concerned ministries of the Union and state governments, formulates the five-year plans. There is an education division in the Planning Commission which in co-operation with the departments in the Ministry of Education and the state governments assists in formulating the educational component of the five-year development plan. A plan co-ordination bureau in the Ministry of Education facilitates co-ordination. At the state level, in those states where educational planning units are set up, they undertake the planning functions; otherwise the planning is handled by the administrative machinery of the departments.

The process of formulating the education-sector plan in the five-year plan is a part of the general process of developing the overall development plan as a whole. Initially the planning bureau of the

Ministry of Education prepares a progress review and a preliminary document of proposals. This is prepared in consultation with the state governments and the Central Advisory Board of Education. The second stage of examination is in the Planning Commission and results in indicative resource allocations for the coming five-year planning period. This leads to the third stage, when the central Ministry of Education prepares the programmes to be directly carried out by it and those that would be funded by it to be implemented by the states.

Simultaneously the state education departments prepare state education plans. All these inputs are then scrutinized and integrated in the Planning Commission to form the education-sector plan of the five-year plan. From year to year and within the framework of the five-year plan, annual plans are prepared both at the central and the state levels. In the ultimate analysis the annual plans with the fiscal allotment are the nuts and bolts of a 'plan as is'. In recent years the district level has been involved more directly in planning.

The organizational mechanism for educational planning in India, it may be observed, is heavily weighted at the top towards integration with the economic planning process, and along the vertical line it is indistinguishable from the machinery of educational administration. Viewing it from the other side, the whole machinery of educational administration is also treated as a planning instrument.

Indonesia. Indonesia offers an example of a different style of mechanism.

Indonesia started a five-year plan in 1956 covering the period 1956–60 and this was followed by an Eight-Year National Overall Development Plan (1961–69), which included a plan for education. However, even before these plans, Indonesia in the 1950s achieved a remarkable expansion of primary education and adult literacy through popular movements.

The eight-year development plan had to be terminated in 1966 and, after a planning pause, the first five-year plan was initiated in 1969. It was, however, only with the inauguration of the second five-year plan in 1974 that a planning machinery was developed and the planning procedures were stabilized. The central planning agency, established in 1969, was strengthened and became the principal organ for developing the five-year socio-economic development plans and the annual plans. Within the guidelines of state policy laid down by the government and the resource allocations indicated by the central

planning agency, the Ministry of Education and the provincial offices develop the draft programmes which after review are integrated by the central planning agency with specification of the targets and projects to form the five-year plan.

In the Ministry of Education a new planning agency was set up in 1969, the Office of Educational Development, with quite extensive planning responsibilities. It:

Prepares projections and forecasts of demographic changes, student flows and outputs. These projections provide the basis for policy decisions by the central planning agency about the targets and the pace of expansion in the five-year plan.

Makes periodical assessment of the state of education and the trends therein.

Develops, along with other departments of the ministry, statistical data, information and analyses and disseminates them.

Formulates programmes for basic qualitative changes in the education system, including curriculum changes.

Liaises with the higher-education sector in preparing the development plans of the universities as a whole.

Identifies important educational problems and undertakes or supports R&D activities in relation to such problems, that may include setting up experimental projects.

In Indonesia, with its geographical expanse and population, the planning capabilities at provincial and other levels below the central level are crucially important. In the mid-1970s pilot projects for integrated regional planning in education were instituted at the provincial level. The results pointed to the need to develop viable planning mechanisms at the provincial level to match the capability attained at the centre. This problem is now being addressed by the training of personnel for the provincial and regional levels.

Educational endeavour in Indonesia in the earlier decades was highly fragmented among a number of government agencies and by geographical levels. The development of the educational planning mechanism did much to bring coherence in the educational effort and in the creation of a national education system.

Pakistan. Pakistan has a federal constitution and responsibility for education rests with the federal and the state government.

The five-year planning series started in 1955. In 1964 a Planning Commission was established as a high-powered body to prepare and

monitor national development plans. The educational component was dealt with by a division in the Commission's office in consultation with the federal and provincial authorities. In 1974 following the announcement of a new education policy ('The Education Policy 1972–1980') the educational planning mechanism was reorganized. A Bureau of Educational Planning with extensive responsibility was set up in the federal Ministry of Education. The functions of the Bureau comprise: (a) preparing plans; (b) conducting research and training programmes; (c) collection, analysis and dissemination of educational statistics; and (d) technical co-operation with international bodies.

Another development flowing from the Education Policy 1972–1980 was the establishment of education councils at various levels (institutions, districts, provinces and national level) in order to engage a wide range of public and professional interests in educational development.

In Pakistan special efforts have been made to link the educational-planning process and educational-policy formulation. The first five-year plan (1955–60) was based on the education policy arising from a series of national education conferences; the second five-year plan (1960–65) was based on the recommendations of the Commission on National Education (1959–60); the third five-year plan was influenced by the Commission on Student Problems; the fourth five-year plan (1970–75) was based largely on the Education Policy 1972–1980; and the fifth and the current sixth five-year plans derive from the National Education Policy and Implementation Programme (1979) and the Action Plan for Educational Development 1983–1988.

The experience in Pakistan confirms the experiences in other countries, namely the need to develop the planning capabilities at sub-national levels in order, among other things, to improve the implementation capacities to the level of effectiveness that matches the scope of the planning process.

Philippines. The Philippines experience presents yet another pattern of organization for educational planning, notably the emergence of regional planning.

The National Economic and Development Authority, established as an advisory body in 1972, is in charge of economic and social planning and the monitoring of programme implementation.

In 1969 a Presidential Commission made an extensive survey of Philippine education and one of its recommendations led to the

establishment of an Office of Planning Services in the Ministry of Education. (Before this there was only a small *ad hoc* unit in the Ministry.) The Office of Planning Services organizes the consultations and studies which lead to the formulation of the national education goals, plan objectives, strategies and targets for the national educational development plan. The Office also co-ordinates these operations internally with the departments in the Ministry and externally with the National Economic Development Authority, National Manpower and Youth Council, Ministry of Labour, etc. Vertically it co-ordinates with the regional development offices.

The regional offices have acquired a pivotal role in the educational planning process in the Philippines. In 1975 a major reorganization of the machinery of government led to the creation of thirteen regional offices, each region comprising a number of provincial and city divisions. In education this signalled a major move in decentralizing planning as well as administration. Each regional office has a regional planning unit and below that each provincial education office has a planning unit. Regional Development Councils have been established in each region as the vehicle for integrating the planning efforts of the various sectoral agencies and co-ordinating with national development activities. Similarly, at the provincial level, a Provincial Development Council has been organized in each province. In the planning for the development of a region the aim is to provide for the integration of the various sectoral development inputs into a common plan frame. In education the attempt was to link education and training programmes to a policy focused on developing agriculture, rural credit, agro-based industries and crafts.

The Philippines planning mechanism has created a substantial demand for educational planning personnel as well as a need for retraining the administrative and supervisory field staff in 'planning-based management'. The Office of Planning Services at the central Ministry of Education organizes the training programmes.

Republic of Korea. Another example of educational planning is drawn from the Republic of Korea, which has had such planning for more than two decades. Two features of the planning organization are especially noteworthy, first, the attempt to situate the medium-term plan in a framework of long-range educational plans, and second, the preparation of five-year educational plans as a programme of action.

The Economic Planning Board, established in 1961 as a high-

powered agency, is responsible for the formulation of overall development plans and for co-ordinating the planning activities of the different ministries and agencies of the Government of the Republic of Korea. Its planning functions include budgeting, evaluation, the collection of statistics and the undertaking of research relevant to planning. The five-year economic-development planning cycle started with the first five-year plan in 1962. Currently the sixth five-year plan is under way. From the second five-year plan onwards, an increasingly useful role was provided by perspective plans on long-range economic prospects.

In the education sector, the Ministry of Education has the major role in educational planning. The Office of Planning and Management in the Ministry is the principal planning organ with responsibilities for co-ordination of educational-planning activities and educational policies, preparation of development plans including the annual operational plans and budgetary plans, plan evaluation and educational statistics. At the provincial level, the provincial boards of education have an important role in the planning process, particularly in implementation, and each board has a plan co-ordinator's office.

Within the overall policies embodied in the economic development plan and the resource allocations, the Ministry of Education formulates the educational plans. The plans focus on specific areas of education and are target-centred and time-bound. They are designed more as implementation plans.

The Nine-Year Plan for Compulsory Education (1965–73), the Ten-Year Plan for Extension of Secondary Education (1965–74) and the Adult Education Plan to abolish illiteracy are examples of area-specific and target-centred educational plans. These plans, though neither comprehensive nor overall, achieved a high level of implementation through a strategy of concentration and prepared the ground for the next phase of educational planning, which was initiated with the establishment in 1969 of the Council for Long-Range Educational Planning on an intersectoral basis. The Council concluded its work with the formulation of a Long-Range Comprehensive Educational Plan (1972–86). The Long-Range Plan became the basis of the first Five-Year Educational Development Plan (1972–76) and the subsequent five-year educational plans. The evidence on the experience of this mode of educational planning points to quite positive gains even though all the goals in the plan could not be reached because of shortfalls in resources. A notable gain has been in influencing in a

positive way the attitudes of administrators towards the long time horizon and the continuity factor called for in educational development. Currently the second long-range plan for education is in preparation and the first draft has been published under the title *Korean Education 2000*[1].

At the other end of the planning spectrum is the annual operational planning, including the budgetary plan. The Economic Planning Board plays a leading role in laying down the guidelines. In the Ministry of Education the Office of Planning and Management reviews and synthesizes the operational and budgetary proposals of the various departments or bureaux of the Ministry and refers the resulting annual plan and budget to the Economic Planning Board for review and incorporation in the overall operational plan and budget.

Certain R&D institutions that have a significant role in the planning process were established in the 1970s. They include the Korean Institute of Science and Technology, the Korean Scientific and Technological Information Center, the Korean Advanced Institute of Science (all these are attached to the Ministry of Science and Technology) and, for education, the Educational Development Institute. In educational planning, the Korean Educational Development Institute has a major role in developing the long-range educational plan and the five-year educational plans. Apart from its policy researches it is the principal instrument for testing new programmes before they are introduced for system-wide adoption in a five-year plan; notable among these trial programmes have been the elementary middle-school development project (1973–76), the educational-technology project, and higher-education reform.

Sri Lanka. The first attempt at overall development planning in Sri Lanka goes back to the mid-1950s and took the form of a six-year investment programme. In the mid-1960s a Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs entrusted with the responsibilities of preparation and implementation of national economic plans was set up. The sectoral components of the economic plan were generally prepared by *ad hoc* interdepartmental committees.

In 1971 a separate unit for educational planning was established and was later raised to a division level. Its functions included:

1. Korean Educational Development Institute, *Korean Education 2000*, Seoul, 1985.

(a) preparation of the five-year plan for education with annual, rolling adjustments; (b) preparation of the annual implementation plan; (c) monitoring the progress of implementation of different programmes; (d) conducting statistical and data-collection activities; and (e) undertaking studies for the formulation of long-term educational plans.

Rolling adjustments on an annual basis take the place of a series of five-year plans, both in overall planning and in educational planning. In the early 1980s, the educational-planning division was strengthened by the incorporation of pilot experimental projects (e.g. a school-cluster project, a field-studies project, etc.) and by assuming responsibility for overseeing the implementation of government policy for education.

The development of planning capability in the regional departments of education has received much attention. There are fifteen administrative units (called regions) in the country, each under a director of education. The regional offices carry almost the whole administration and supervision responsibility with regard to general education (other than technical education) and each has a planning unit.

In Sri Lanka a number of high-powered commissions have made recommendations on the reform and reorganization of education. The educational-planning mechanism is closely geared to giving effect to these reforms.

The role of international agencies in the evolution of educational planning in Asia

Educational planning in the Asian countries started at the same time as a strong interest in planning generally emerged world-wide, in developed countries as much as in the new nations. The formative years of the 1950s and 1960s saw much international flow of information and ideas across international boundaries, in general planning as well as in educational planning. A few countries in Asia in the early 1960s were able to train abroad a substantial number of their personnel for educational planning needs through bilateral programmes. However, the most sustained input has been provided by Unesco and its associate, the International Institute for Educational Planning (the IIEP). In 1959–60 Unesco was instrumental in developing a 'regional' plan for primary education under the title 'The Needs of Asia in Primary Education' (more popularly known

as the Karachi Plan). It was a twenty-year plan for achieving universal compulsory education of at least seven years' duration. In 1965 a more elaborate regional plan was formulated covering all levels and types of education and projecting developments in a fifteen-year time frame. It was published under the title *The Asian Model of educational development for 1965–80*. Unesco jointly with the Government of India established a regional institute in New Delhi for the training of educational planners for the Asian countries. At the expiry of the ten-year period, Unesco's regional office of education (at Bangkok) took over the training functions and has continued them in co-operation with the IIEP in Paris. Apart from the regional and international programmes, Unesco has provided technical assistance in educational planning to individual countries, particularly in setting up their educational-planning mechanisms. Such assistance has been provided to, among others, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan and Thailand.

In retrospect one can discern that the influence of the international activities has been mediated through individuals rather than through institutional mechanisms. No educational-planning process in any country is just a replication of another system or a model evolved elsewhere. The Karachi Plan and the Asian Model were influential more for the analyses of the educational problems such as drop-out, lack of diversification, etc., rather than for the predominantly quantitative methods they used, which resulted in the exclusion of concerns that lay uppermost in the national planning efforts, such as the development of an education system and its qualitative change, mobilization of unconventional resources for education and so on. Both these plans were flawed, as were several national development plans around that time, by a gross underestimation of the population growth rates. None the less, these plans did serve to draw attention in the countries to the totally inadequate organizations for the collection and treatment of statistical data.

An overall view

The country sketches presented above show the commonalities and variations in the ways in which educational planning has been organized in the Asian countries. Significantly, the differences are more pronounced in the early phases of planning, but with the growing experience of implementing the plans there are more commonalities.

Typologies of the planning process. Educational plans in Asian countries are to be found mainly in three formats. In some countries the educational plan is a part of the overall five-year national development plan. It is the product of consultations between the economic planning agency on the one hand and the ministry/department of education and other agencies concerned with various aspects of education on the other. For example, India, Malaysia, Nepal and the Philippines, among other countries, have followed this format.

In the second format, the educational plan (for a five-year planning time horizon) is developed separately within the guidelines and policies determined in the overall national development plan. The ministry/department of education and other directly concerned agencies are principally responsible for developing the educational plan in consultation with the economic planning agency, which indicates the resources ceiling for education as well as the manpower and other needs. Illustrations of this format are, among others, the Republic of Korea and Thailand.

Another format which is not discussed in the country sketches but is identifiable in a few countries consists of a series of interlocking policy decisions and consequential action plans. The parameters are provided by economic decisions (on the existing and prospective directions of growth), which are a function of the economic planning processes, and the key elements of educational development are identified by educational search processes. A series of time-bound educational plans focusing on specific key elements may then be formulated. The format links educational-policy decisions, strategy formulation and implementation action in a sequence. Illustrative examples can be drawn from Japan in the 1970s.

The overall development plan prepared in 1970, as modified by the 1973 Basic Plan for Economic Society, provided the framework for economic growth. The 1971 report of the Central Council for Education on the *Basic guidelines for the development of an integrated educational system suited to contemporary society* defined the key elements for the reform and restructuring of primary, secondary and higher education and provided recommendations on basic policies for long-range planning of education up to 1980. Based on these guideposts a series of time-bound and specific objective-focused plans were issued, e.g.: the 1971 Ten-Year Plan for the Improvement and Expansion of Kindergarten Education; the 1972 Ten-Year

Plan for the Development of Special Education; the Five-Year Plan for the Improvement of Teachers' Status; the fourth Five-Year Plan for the Improvement of Compulsory Education Schools; the Five-Year Plan for Aiding Private Institutions at the Third Level, etc.

The above three formats refer to the national-level planning action. An important dimension of such action lies downstream from the top—from the national to the constituent political/administrative geographical entities such as states/provinces, regions, districts, etc. For education these sub-national levels are specially important in building up and implementing an educational plan. This appears to be more clearly recognized in the educational plans of formats two and three and less so in format one where they have tended to be submerged in the aggregated magnitudes.

Emergence of a common pattern of educational-planning mechanism. The experience in the Asian countries points quite clearly to the need for an identifiable organizational mechanism for educational planning which in certain ranges is distinguishable from the general educational administration by virtue of its functions, skills and the knowledge it calls for. This is the pattern which is now the most common in the Asian countries and one which has worked more effectively than in other patterns in which educational planning is submerged either in general developmental planning, losing the educational specificity, or in general educational administration.

The educational-planning mechanisms have facilitated co-ordination not only within the ministry of their location but also with other agencies concerned with any aspects of education. However their functions, it must be stressed, are centred on planning and not limited to co-ordination.

In countries which have set up the educational-planning mechanisms, there is a considerable body of staff engaged in full-time planning functions. In some countries the staff are drawn entirely from the education cadres; in other countries they are drawn partly from the education cadres and partly from outside. Educational planning is essentially a team enterprise and experience has demonstrated clearly that a team with a varied background of knowledge and a range of skills is more effective than one with a homogeneous background. Furthermore, as experience in educational planning has broadened, it is being recognized increasingly that there is a second, and wider, order of the distribution of planning functions involving the total

administrative-supervisory organization at all levels, including in particular the institutional and field levels. The skills and insights of educational planning therefore need to be incorporated in the administrative and supervisory functions. Two important developments have followed from this recognition. First, in very recent years, several Asian countries have established national-level institutions for research and the training and retraining of educational administrators, along with educational planners. (For example, all countries for whom the sketches are presented above have established such national institutions.) Second, there is now a strong move (as we see from the Philippines and Sri Lanka cases above) towards decentralizing the planning process in an effort to bring it closer to the people whose needs are to be served. This is undoubtedly one of the most important thrusts in the revitalization of the planning process. We will return to this theme again in the next chapter.

IV. Educational planning in Asia: a retrospect

The contribution of educational planning

The countries of Asia have come a considerable way in the last three or four decades in developing their education. Most have achieved breakthroughs on a dramatic scale in terms of the population provided with educational opportunities of an increasingly diversified nature; a few are still short of the minimum threshold but are clearly on course to achieving it in the near future. During much of this period, educational planning within the larger framework of overall economic and social planning has had a role in the development of education. The impact of educational planning on the direction and kind of educational development is expected to vary from one country to another, depending on a host of factors, important among them being the specific type and methods of educational planning used. However, surprisingly, there are more commonalities in the ways educational planning has influenced education in the developing countries of Asia than one would expect given the diversities in their social, economic and even political systems.

The linkage of education to overall development planning, though in some technical aspects a constraining factor, has had an important liberating influence on education. As noted in Chapter I, the impetus for economic development through planned efforts is derived in the developing countries from the recognition of poverty, economic inequalities and social rigidities. The overall framework of development planning has had the effect of sensitizing educational effort to the larger social, economic and political context in which educational development is embedded. The awareness of the larger questions of

social equity and the quality of life has contributed to redefining the directions of educational development. Such concepts as equal access to educational opportunities, equitable distribution of educational facilities, and the educational needs of the poor and marginalized population groups in society are no longer confined to the realm of theory; they are the rationale for the planning of education as much as they are the indicators by which the progress is judged.

The most striking impact of educational planning is to be seen in the evolution of overall, integrated education systems. Earlier, the educational enterprises typically were highly fragmented, by levels of education, by types of education, by controlling authorities and by funding sources. They were more assemblages of institutions rather than systems responding to some common goals. Planning is concerned first and foremost—and this distinguishes it from administration—with the system in its totality which the planning process seeks to modify. The educational-planning process has helped to give coherence to educational development by promoting a more unified policy approach to its various problems. In consequence a more rational organizational structure has evolved, replacing the earlier fragmentation. The organization is both *overall*, in the sense that it embraces all educational activities, formal and non-formal, and *integrated*, in the sense that it is linked to the larger social and economic policy. The evolution of national education systems in the developing Asia is by no means complete, as would be evident from the current proposals for educational reforms in the countries. But the systems are now certainly capable of self-sustaining growth.

Traditional educational systems were heavily biased towards 'academic' learning through hierarchically organized institutions. With the increasing attention given to the economic context of education, in particular the manpower linkage, educational planning has brought technical and vocational forms of education progressively into the mainstream of educational development. Another significant evolution has been in the growth of non-formal education, which is opening up new opportunities for learning to different age groups in populations otherwise unreached by the formal-education institutions. The education system has thus acquired greater depth and relevance by its orientation to the world of work and greater outreach through non-formal education.

The time horizons of educational plans—long-range/five years—have not only reinforced the sense of long perspectives in which the education

enterprise is to be seen but also, what is important, the need for continuities in policies and action. Nothing has been more disruptive of educational progress in the developing countries in Asia than frequent and politically obsessive policy changes. A sound plan has generally proved to be the best safeguard against such a contingency.

Educational planning has had a strong impact on educational administration and, equally, educational administration has had an important role in the evolution of educational planning in each country. The two modes of action are closely related and yet distinguishable. A plan divorced from the realities and constraints of administration is no more than a castle in the air, and administrative action without the underpinning of planning reduces itself to an exercise in transience. Planning by its nature does what administration does not necessarily have to do—view the system steadily and holistically in a longer time perspective.

Educational planning has served to sharpen administrative perception of the problems of efficiency in the educational systems. The normal tools of educational planning such as unit cost, cost effectiveness, etc., are based on efficiency concepts and have served administrators well from institutional level up. Certain other problems, like school drop-out, repetition and examination attrition, which have their origin in education have been presented with much greater impact in their economic and social context of educational planning.

Statistics and data collection and analysis have greatly improved as educational-planning mechanisms have developed and strengthened. This has added to better informed administrative judgements in the working of the education systems. In most countries, statistics and data collection are an assigned function of the central educational-planning organization and this has clearly contributed to improving the coverage and timeliness of statistical data collection.

Allocation of resources to education and to other developmental sectors over a plan period vests primarily in the economic planning agency advising the Cabinet/highest level of government authority. The educational-planning organization or any other sector planning organization has only a persuasive role in the allocation process. It has however a more active role (but not a determining one) in making the allocations within the sector to different levels and types of education. The educational planning role has enhanced interdepartmental co-ordination within the ministry as well as with other agencies

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outside the ministry concerned with any aspect of education (for example higher education, which in most countries is located in another organization or ministry).

The problems

Excessive quantitative orientation. The planning approach in education has been predominantly quantitative, both in analysis and in the normative aspect: student flows through the primary–secondary–tertiary complex, diversification of enrolment, estimation of emerging numbers, targets in terms of numbers of new institutions/enrolments, etc. The increase in the sophistication of planning methods has also been along the quantitative route. Preoccupation with the purely methodological and technical has tended to obscure or displace the larger objectives which the methods are intended to serve.

This trend has been further reinforced by the procedures used in the general planning for allocation of resources ceilings in the five-year plans. The 'real' planning in education could start only after the plan ceiling of resources was indicated by the economic planning agency. The educational plan thus tended more and more to be preoccupied with the fiscal aspect and with programmes which had 'price tags'. In the result educational programmes which called for 'resources' other than purely financial (e.g. resources of innovative thought and action, of creative management, of community support, etc.) received relatively low priority or remained outside the purview of the plan.

With almost exclusive emphasis on quantitative methods and 'price tag' programmes and the focus on a narrow range of educational objectives, notably those of economic character, educational planning has tended to diverge from educational development, which seeks to realize the multiple goals of educative action. There is a widening split between the educational-planning process and the substance and content of educational development. The planning process and procedures are becoming passive responses to the demands as they arise, and the educational system as an adaptive mechanism rather than a dynamic one. In the circumstances an educational plan becomes a 'tactical' operation with no involvement in the conception or interpretation of the multiple goals and values by which educational development is guided or in the definition of strategies by which the multiple goals are to be realized.

Over-centralization. Planning generally, including educational planning, has inherently a strong centralizing tendency in the decision-making process as well as in the style of management. This tendency can be mitigated only by deliberately designed countervailing measures. In Asia, especially in the first decade of educational plans, educational planning became more and more centralized even in countries with federal-type constitutions.

In recent years, as the country sketches in the previous chapter show, there is a growing concern over the consequences of an over-centralized planning process.

It cannot be gainsaid that the contribution that educational planning has been able to make to coherent development of the education systems and to a sense of national endeavour would not have been furthered to the same degree if there had been a less unified approach to designing the educational plans. When, however, planning becomes a going concern as it has in almost all Asian countries, it has to adopt more complex approaches in order to deal with diversities inherent in the development process.

The centralized tilt in educational planning has become counter-productive on three counts. First, the planning process in a centralized mode is more focused on commonalities of different contexts and ignores the diversities—a pursuit of one model to fit all situations. This makes for a plan divorced from the realities of human needs and aspirations and is especially deleterious in the educational domain where the human element is all. Thus, areas and population groups which are undersupplied with educational facilities or which have special characteristics or needs are more likely to continue to be marginalized by a rigidly centralized plan. Second, the gap between the educational plans and plan implementation (alluded to earlier) is in a very large measure to be attributed to excessive centralization in the planning process. Those who plan and those who execute in effect belong to 'two cultures' with few common lines of communication. The locus of educational action lies largely at the micro-level, whether it is the community or an institution. In the absence of any counterbalancing mechanism, the implementation of an educational plan 'loses power' at each downstream level. Thus a primary-education programme at community level is more likely to suffer 'loss of power' in implementation than a programme at the central level to set up a new university. In highly centralized educational planning, the imbalances in the system are replicated in the implementation of new

plans also. Third, and possibly most important, centralized educational planning has tended to reduce almost to insignificance the participatory approach in the formulation of the plans.

Weakness in implementation. Educational planning in the developing countries in Asia is generally at the stage where it functions more as a technical input to policy-making, and is not so closely related to the process of implementation, which is seen as lying in the administrative domain.

This lack of adequate and suitable interlinkage between educational planning and implementation is a weakness that tends to introduce serious distortions in the planning process by abstracting it from the larger process of making decisions, taking action and receiving feedback. Thus it is observable that though the educational plans generally comprise both quantitative expansion and qualitative changes, it is the quantitative-expansion programmes that get implemented and the programmes of qualitative changes are casualties in the process.

One reason for weak linkage between educational planning and implementation lies in the centralized structure of the educational-planning organization.

There are no counterpart educational-planning structures at the downstream levels where implementation actually occurs. Thus the longer the down stream, the greater is the distance between planning and implementation. Several Asian countries recognize this as a serious problem which has eroded the effectiveness of educational planning. Planning units are being established at downstream levels (such as province, state or region) and, more significantly, the administrative personnel at all these levels are being retrained in planning functions. The lesson from experience is clear; the skills and insights of the general administrator do not automatically transfer to plan-based management; they need to be added to it.

Evaluation—a growing edge. Initially, the evaluation dimension of educational planning was slow to grow but with improvement in data collection it has become an important function of the educational-planning organization. Even though the scope of evaluation is constrained by the purely quantitative procedures in use, evaluation has contributed, apart from its feedback function, to a greater measure of control, rigour and accountability in the educational

administrative practices. The present periodic assessment in largely quantitative terms of enrolments, progression rates, graduate output, etc., is clearly a totally inadequate tool for educational planning of more than rudimentary complexity and needs to be supplemented by educational-performance evaluation in terms of effectiveness and outcomes.

The continuing concerns: an agenda of issues

Equal educational opportunities for all sections of the population. Has the enormous expansion of education that has taken place opened the doors of opportunity wider for the poor and the deprived sections of the population who in the developing countries—in Asia as elsewhere—are the majority? Evidence suggests that the benefits of educational development have not reached the low-income socio-economic population groups in any appreciable measure. In this, education follows the pattern set by general economic development. In consequence, the social structure is put under heavy strain by the cumulative burden of deprivation that large sections of the population have to bear. Equal access to education is no longer a theoretical proposition only; it has the immediacy and urgency of a practical developmental problem.

With the high rates of adult illiteracy and non-enrolment of children which are to be found among the low-income population groups in some Asian countries even the minimum threshold is not reached, and educational opportunities that turn into economic and social opportunities remain beyond their grasp.

In a large number of countries, the chances of surviving the full primary cycle by the children from poor homes are severely limited by the heavy toll taken by repetition and dropping out. For them, educational handicaps are inseparably linked with social and economic deprivation. Inequalities in educational outcomes affect a large number of even those children who are able to stay the course. Available evidence suggests that this is the case even in countries which may have attained a high enrolment ratio and have eliminated dropping out at the primary level. Unless the goal of equity is directly addressed by educational policy and planning with compensatory programmes, the school factors left to themselves have little impact in reducing the disparities or the constraints on wide avenues of access.

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Expansion at the primary level. The expansion of education on a large scale in the developing countries of Asia has created a climate of educational expectation, which is a social change of far-reaching import. The increasing numbers of literate/educated persons in the population reinforce the expansionary impetus almost exponentially. These are irreversible developments.

A majority of the countries in Asia have provided primary education for all children and others will reach this target in the near future. Further development of first-level education points clearly in the direction of an extended common learning experience for all children in order to develop their potential for further education or participation in life outside the school. The kind of short-duration, stripped-down 'minimum basic' education advocated and even funded by certain international agencies has proved a blind alley.

Vocationalization at the secondary level. By far the most crucial issue in the further development of the education systems lies in the diversification of post-primary education, offering opportunities for the acquisition of practical and employable skills by all young people in secondary education as a part of general education as well as in the form of vocational education. In several Asian countries, 'vocationalization' of secondary education has been an important policy objective in recent years, but the implementation has been inadequate and has consequently failed to change the purely 'academic' character of secondary education. The shortfall is basically attributable to the planning methods, which were ill-designed for dealing with problems of effectuating changes simultaneously in the content and the structures of education.

Diversification at the post-secondary level. In many Asian countries the expansion of higher education has reached the point where it should be possible to give high priority to other needs than numerical expansion, notably structural diversification of tertiary institutions and qualitative upgrading of higher education.

The numerical expansion in higher education in some countries has outstripped the available supply of academic and other resources, despite the fact that higher education has appropriated a relatively large share of the financial resources of the education sector. Much of the numerical increase has gone into universities/colleges and in the arts and humanities fields of study. Other post-secondary insti-

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tutions offering diverse educational opportunities through vocationally orientated studies have not grown on an appreciable scale.

Out-of-school education. The planning efforts which have consolidated the education systems have also added new elements to the education systems, such as a growing network of learning and training opportunities outside the formal structures. The educational systems in future will need to take account of the diversified development needs of the learners (both young people and adults) and be reorientated to the changing social and economic environment.

The development of the education systems will not be concerned only with the formal structures but also encompass the learning and training routes outside the school, giving particular attention to the needs of young people who discontinue schooling between the primary and secondary level or between school and tertiary education.

Quality of education. Quality of education is now a central issue in educational development. One of the major concerns of educational reforms in Asian countries is the enhancement of quality of education. In many ways the issue of quality underlies the multiple problems which higher education is confronted with in several countries.

Quality, like education itself, cannot be encapsulated in a neat definition. It is an attribute of the various elements which make up an education system and gives character to the outcomes of the constituent elements as well as to the system. At the level of the individual learner it is expressed in the quality of his or her style of learning: how the learner's potential is developed, the breadth and depth of the knowledge, understandings and skills acquired, and the attitudes, the styles of work and behaviour which are cultivated. This does not apply only to a small percentage of learners; it should be valid for all learners in forms appropriate at different stages of education. At the institutional level, quality is expressed in the effective realization of stated goals, in the standards of performance and the ways in which all learners are helped to achieve them. At the level of the system as a whole, quality is expressed in the policies which combine the achievement of individual goals and the social goals, generate and sustain the climate of achievement and creativity in the institutions and other learning places, and communicate with the wider community which education serves. Qualitative standards are not fixed goals; in a quality-conscious system, standards of perform-

ance must rise continuously; they are moving goals. The experiences of many Asian countries highlight the need for policies directed specifically to qualitative enhancement and for careful defining of the standards of educational performance, the attainment of which can be monitored. Consequently the future role of educational planning will call for new approaches based on qualitative requisites of educational development.

Mobilization of resources. The mobilization and productive use of resources in education is one of the key elements on which the future development of the education systems depends. In most developing countries in Asia, the allocations of financial resources to education in the five-year plans have not only been highly restrictive, they have also failed to keep pace with the increase in the numbers of students. Further development of the education systems towards new goals and in new directions will call for a fair share of the national product to be allocated to education as an indispensable element in raising the quality of life of the people. However, the constraint on resources, though abated, will continue and will call for innovative action to mobilize and use new resources. More participation in planning and management and a closer relationship between the school and its community are instances of the kind of action that has tapped new resources for education.

Unemployment of the educated. In Asian countries which have the problem of unemployment among the educated young people, a substantial proportion of the unemployed consists of secondary-level school-leavers. The solution or mitigation of the problem of unemployment depends on factors and measures affecting the economic and political domain as a whole, not only education. At the same time educational policies, in addition to serving individual development and self-fulfilment, have to address a wide spectrum of societal needs through the creation of a broader base of education and training and the reorientation of educational structures and content for greater relevance to the social and economic goals.

New directions in educational planning in Asia

Decentralization and participatory planning. Decentralization of educational planning within a framework in which the productive

experiences of unified planning are combined with extensive recourse to a participatory planning mode is a desideratum of major importance for the future development of education in Asian countries. This involves first decentralizing a range of planning and decision-making functions to regional and community levels, including institutions. One such form of decentralization in some countries in Asia is 'regional planning', which seeks to relate development planning more closely to the needs and potential of geographical regions in a country. This has proved particularly important for dealing with problems of unequal educational opportunities and of relevance in education. In a few countries this process has been carried further, with planning taking place at the level of village clusters which not only participate in the planning process but are responsible for generating a substantial part of the resources needed for education in the area.

Another aspect of decentralization is participatory planning, engaging a wide range of publics in the formulation of the educational plans—from the ground level of the school and its community to the communities of teachers, school and higher-education administrators, scientific workers, parents and legislators. The participatory process in education stimulates greater involvement of the people in fashioning the education that will determine an important aspect of the future. It also promotes within the education system a more receptive climate for innovation and change. A generally common feature of the present educational plans in Asia is the absence of any wide public debate and participation. In consequence the educational plans tend to be tied to small incremental changes, or even no change. The impetus for substantial change and reorientation in the purposes and processes of education is generated by reform movements outside the established planning mechanisms.

Linkages between evaluation, research and planning. Evaluation in educational planning has yet to develop in a comprehensive way. There are two areas that call for urgent attention. There is first the need to monitor on a continuing basis the social and other changes that affect educational demand for choice and the social and geographical distribution of educational opportunities and benefits. Such social monitoring is indispensable if educational planning is to be more purposefully related to the development goals. The other need is to be able to evaluate on a continuing basis the working of the education

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system as a whole or its constituent segments. A few countries in Asia have been moving in this direction (for example Malaysia, the Philippines), with substantial impact on educational planning. The monitoring of the social changes affecting educational demand, and the performance evaluations of the educational system/subsystem call for the active participation of development institutions and organizations in the planning process. The practice in the Republic of Korea (through the Korean Educational Development Institute) and in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (through its Central Institute of Educational Research) are examples of linking research and educational planning and are symptomatic of a significant trend in the evolution of educational planning.

New educational technologies and distance learning. Another area is that of educational technologies which, in the form of radio and television, are becoming increasingly influential in the methods and content of education as well as in the development of new types of institutions based on distance-learning techniques. The development activities of these institutions and other innovative projects have set in motion far-reaching change processes in the content area in education. However, in most countries these developments move parallel with the planning activities rather than convergently.

Towards educational reforms. Has educational planning in its present form reached a plateau beyond which further growth must mean new directions and new goals? Or has the original stimulus of educational planning in promoting educational development now exhausted itself?

The general review of educational planning presented earlier makes the point that educational planning has been an important force in Asia in the development and consolidation of the education systems of these countries. For two decades, and in some countries for as long as three decades, the countries have invested in setting up their educational-planning organizations. What was experimental or exploratory in the early years developed quickly into an established way of viewing and acting upon the educational process that affects very large segments of the population. The challenge implicit in the above opening questions comes from the very successes that can be claimed by educational planning.

The development of an education system is a function of the

polarization between the stimulus and challenge of change at one end and the system's inertial weight at the other end. Every change brought about in an education system becomes a part of the system after having raised it to a higher gradient. New change stimulus thus becomes critically important if the growth process is not to lapse into inertia.

How educational planning has moved across this spectrum in any country can be tracked by ascertaining: (a) how any particular development or significant innovation in education in the country arose; (b) the role of educational-planning organizations and practitioners in the major reforms of the education system in the country; and (c) changes introduced in educational planning in terms of its scope and perspectives. In some countries in Asia educational planning is being reorientated to new objectives and methods and is in effect entering the 'second generation' phase with a high degree of convergence with change movements in education and society. Where such reorientation has not occurred, the educational-planning methods used in the past have tended to operate as constraining factors in the development of education.

Every change in education is in the final analysis a change in the objectives, content, spirit and style of the learning process and its outcomes in the learners' development. Planning that is uninvolved in this process soon reduces itself to a marginal role in the reshaping of education.

There has been in the Asian countries, during the last decade or so, an accelerating movement for a fundamental reorientation of the educational content and methods in keeping with the rapidly changing economic, technological and social needs, including the profound changes brought about in the education systems by the inflow of vastly increased numbers of students. The impetus derives from mainly three sources: first, the perception regarding the modernizing role of education by its action in modifying attitudes and creating scientific-technological capacities; second, the expanded knowledge base regarding the curriculum development and educational technologies; and third, the search for greater social values and relevance.

Educational policies in the developing Asia are now more concerned with changing the education systems than with ratifying existing practices, and with the energizing role of education in the mitigation of social disparities than with quantitative models of enrolments.

The link of educational planning with educational policy has weakened appreciably as planning has become just a technical input essentially limited to the function of anticipating numerical growth and its distribution in the educational complex. Its more important role of foreseeing problems in the context of overall goals and of identifying options, alternatives and key issues has yet to become operative. Any agenda for the revitalization of the educational planning process would need to proceed from the enhancement of its capacity sensitively to respond to change, particularly social change, and to provide an adequate knowledge base for policy-making. In any such agenda, educational planning and educational administration are to be seen as two mutually enhancing capabilities which serve policy-making, affecting education's role in improving the quality of life of the people, which is the *raison d'être* of planning, economic or educational, in the developing nations.

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V. Towards revitalizing educational planning: the role of reforms

Educational reforms in Asia: the features

In Asian countries, as elsewhere, the issues of educational development and change have led to search for educational reforms. Several countries were exploring educational reforms well before educational planning became established in the machinery of government administration. The educational reform trend has grown greatly in the last few decades following the realization that educational plans were not wholly fulfilling their tasks. However, where educational planning has been concerned with issues of social and qualitative changes, educational reform and planning processes have been greatly strengthened by the symbiotic association.

One of the crucially important features of educational-reform inquiries carried out by high-powered commissions is the public debate and consultations with a wide range of publics on the issues of reform. Education is first and foremost a human enterprise and what happens in or to education affects almost every family in a nation. Hence arises its 'conservatism' (a term which beneath the surface means well-placed mistrust of experts), and therefore the need for consultation, which also serves to raise the public awareness of the issues. Many an educational reform has had a great fall because it ignored those who were to be vitally affected by it. Educational planning has not in any country evolved a significantly effective consultation and participatory process and therefore its capacity to offer changes has been limited.

Furthermore, educational-reform inquiries which have proved effective have generally been those that were linked to the decision-

making at the highest level of government. Depending on the constitutional set-up in a country, the linkage would include political decision-making bodies as well as the legislative organs. This gives in the best instances a power and authority to the reform measures, ensuring their success by having exposed them to the unpredictable consequences of political changes.

The impetus for educational reform and change is provided by the issues, problems and aspirations which at the time are seen to deeply affect the education system and to have important consequences. Though no educational reform can be expected to be valid for a very long time, it has a sufficiently long time-horizon to serve as a frame for the educational plans over three or four planning periods. This provides yet another point of linkage between the two processes. Where such linkage has been developed, the implementation is more effective and educational planning is more closely involved in qualitative changes.

Types of reform

Should educational reforms be comprehensive, covering every aspect and conception of education, or is it more effective to approach the problem piecemeal, setting defined limits at a time to a proposed change? Perhaps the answer depends on how comprehensive is comprehensive and how piecemeal is piecemeal. The experiences in Asia point to the middle way, with the 'effective implementation potential' as the determining test. Piecemeal reforms unless they have a measure of comprehensiveness may fail to make any impact in a fast-changing educational context; they seem to be more appropriate in relatively stable education systems. On the other hand, 'comprehensive reforms' may turn out to be castles in the air because the capacities for implementation and the financial and human resources that they call for are not available. In Asia there have been a number of such failures in the last two decades. The linkage of educational reform of a comprehensive character with policy-making on the one hand and the planning of education on the other hand is again an important issue for the reform process and the planning process.

Dominant issues in reforms

In the current round of educational reforms in the developing countries of Asia there are five dominant issues round which the reform changes revolve. A majority of them relate directly to the elements of the education systems and therefore the reforms are tilted heavily to the internal factors in education.

The first issue, which affects a range of educational elements, is that of rising numbers of students at all levels of the education system. These numbers will continue to increase as educational opportunities are more equitably distributed, as the direction of primary education is changed to create a viable learning threshold and as non-formal paths open opportunities more widely. The expansionary momentum is beginning to peak at the secondary and higher levels. These are irreversible trends and call for a range of changes, in which structural reorganization at the secondary level is seen as pivotal in the reform proposals of all countries. The second issue is the creation of effective links with income generation and manpower requirements. This gives rise to the proposals for expansion of technical and vocational education at the secondary level and its integration with general secondary education. The third issue is of qualitative upgrading at all levels through curriculum development and all other elements in the education system. The fourth centre of interest is science and technology as the springboard for modernization essential for national development. Fifth and finally, there are in all reform proposals formulations of the overall goals and objectives which should guide the education systems. As is to be expected, there are greater differences from one country to another in the formulating of overarching goals than there are in the other four issues.

In a few countries educational reform is a process of incremental changes built into the set of elements which make an education system: learners, teachers, teaching/learning processes, curriculum, administration and structures. The role of educational planning in the strategy of incremental changes is to facilitate the changes in the set of elements in order to make the process function efficiently and effectively. The nature of changes to be made is essentially a matter of specialists' judgement, tempered by evaluation feedback. The foci of the planning process are the ongoing activities rather than foreseeing or anticipating, the stability of the factors within the education system rather than the pressure of social change. Indonesia is an example of

this incremental approach to educational reforms. On attaining political independence in 1950 it launched a massive programme of adult literacy and expansion of primary education and carried forward these programmes in subsequent five-year plans with increasing intensity.

In a variation of this approach, the formulation of educational reforms is linked directly to decision-making level and is designed so as to provide a frame for subsequent educational plans. The initial conception is not only wide in scope but also derived from a perception of the need for a comprehensive change.

The reform tends to concentrate on the internal elements of the education system. Educational planning has a supporting role in the identification of key elements for decision and, subsequently, in converting the decisions into action plans over a period of time. In this approach, the implementation performance is found to be high. Malaysia and the Republic of Korea provide examples of this approach.

On the eve of independence in Malaysia a series of reform measures (see the Razak Report, 1956) were taken with the objectives of developing a unified educational system, ensuring national cohesion, eliminating ethnic disparities and meeting the manpower requirements. These reform measures were the central core of the first three five-year development plans of Malaysia. In 1979 a special Cabinet committee made a comprehensive examination of the system and made proposals for emphasis on qualitative improvement. The proposals are to be implemented in the current (fourth five-year plan) and subsequent plans.

The Council for Long-Range Educational Planning introduced educational reforms in the Republic of Korea in the 1960s and they became the basis for the first and subsequent Five-Year Educational Development Plans. Currently the 'second' round of educational reform is under study. A Presidential Commission for Education Reform was established in 1985 and has made a report on strategies for educational reform which reveals a comprehensive approach to the reform problems.

Reforms and their implementation

Educational reforms have had in the past a modest record of success in implementation. At the same time, the growing isolation of edu-

cational planning from the mainstream of education has tended to weaken the full range of its contribution to educational change. The direction of future development beyond the present crossroads may well lie in a productive complementarity between the processes.

A variety of factors go into making an educational reform work. In the experience of several Asian countries, one of the decisive factors in implementation is the link between the educational-reform process and the overall national policy-making process on the one hand and planning/administrative resources and capacities committed to the implementation process on the other.

For example: the impetus for the 1985 educational reform in China derived from the larger economic and social context; and is an integral part of her reforms in economic as well as scientific and technological structure. The Reform Decision[1] not only specifies the priorities but also spells out the order of increase in the financial resources for education at central and local government levels as well as the responsibility for drawing up and implementing plans flowing from the Reform Decision. The planning and implementation process locks into the Reform Decision specifically at the provincial level.

The constitutional and administrative organization of government, especially in the distribution of policy-making functions among the constituent entities, is an important determinant of the form of educational reform and its implementation through educational plans and programmes. Education reform cannot be planned effectively without considering the context of the political and administrative organizations on which education systems depend. For example, in India there have been three rounds of educational reform, including the current one (1986). Immediately on achieving political independence the Government of India initiated the first round of reforms aimed at modifying the structural imbalance in education. High-powered commissions to inquire into university education and secondary education were set up. Curiously, there was no central initiative in primary education, which was left to the constituent states.

Given the constitutional position[2] in a federal structure, an edu-

1. *Reform of China's educational structure—decision of the CPC Central Committee (May 1985)*, Beijing.
2. Under the constitution of India, education was a subject within the authority of the constituent states, with only a limited set of items assigned to central

cational reform of schooling to be workable must carry the full engagement of the constituent states. The recommendations of the two commissions were not wholly integrated in the educational-planning process and their effect on the subsequent evolution of the education system in India remains problematic.

In 1964 the Government of India set up a commission with wide terms of reference, covering all levels and types of education. The commission held extensive consultations within the country as well as internationally. However, the educational-planning mechanisms of the country do not seem to have been involved directly with the commission's inquiry processes nor were representatives of the state governments included as members. This omission contributed crucially to the difficulties experienced in implementing the commission's proposals, which were embodied in the national policy resolution (1968). The major shortfall arose in implementation through the lack of any implementation strategy and planning involvement. The third round of reform currently in the making proceeds from this candid evaluation. It has adopted a different approach from that of the earlier commission.

National debate is at the core of a new approach to policy formulation. The educational-planning mechanisms have been closely involved in the nation-wide consultation and assessment of the response. The result of this process is a new national policy on education which has been adopted by the government following parliamentary approval. The guidelines of the national policy have been translated into a 'Programme of Action' providing the broad strategy within which specific projects will be delineated and incorporated in the current (seventh five-year plan) and subsequent five-year plans. This completes the loop encompassing educational planning and educational-reform processes, at least at the conceptual level.

Educational development in a dynamic situation is so closely intertwined with planning, foresight, heightened responsiveness to change, and capacity for action by goals that the processes' underlying policy, planning and implementation coalesce even when the organizational mechanisms are, for practical reasons, distinguishable. In

government. By a constitutional amendment which was strongly influenced by the experience of educational reform and planning, the centre and the states now have concurrent jurisdiction over education.

this approach continuity and change, the socio-economic context and the individual fulfilment, unified national policy and diversification of possibilities—all these, instead of either/or—are held together in harmonized balance.

Japan has currently a movement for educational reform under way, which is generally referred to as the 'third educational reform'. The first was the foundation of the national education system in 1872 parallel with the Meiji Restoration; the first reform was also the first education plan, a blueprint for developing a unified school system.

The establishment of a unified school system was completed by 1890 and in 1896 a Supreme Council on Education was established as an advisory body to the Minister of Education for formulating educational policies in Japan.

In 1917 a Special Council on Education was set up in the Cabinet to advise the Prime Minister about further expansion of the education system. The Council's recommendations led to a dramatic expansion of education, notably higher education, and were the basic frame for educational development until the period of post-war reform in Japan.

The second educational reform took place on the termination of war in 1945. The changes that the reform aimed at were twofold: reform in educational aims and objectives; and reform of the education system. The changes in the aims and objectives were the more fundamental and possibly more enduring and they contributed profoundly to the surge of development of Japan. In 1967 the Central Council on Education (an advisory body to the Minister of Education) undertook a review of the progress of education during a twenty-year period after the post-war reform and its recommendations (1971) focused on the needed adjustments in education to social change, technological innovation, urbanization, etc. There was a widespread perception that the changes needed were of wider range than could be dealt with internally in the education system. This led to the establishment in 1964 of the National Council on Educational Reform within the Cabinet. The Council produced three interim reports before submitting its final report in August 1987. The Council in its work 'evaluated and reflected on both the positive results and the limitations of the hundred years of development of Japan's modern education, and analysed both the possibilities and the problems of education which will be brought about by (Japanese) society in the

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twentieth-first century'. An important feature of the report is a set of recommendations specifically addressed to the implementation of the educational reforms.[1]

The future of educational planning in Asia

Educational planning has made significant contributions towards the growth, consolidation and evolution of national systems of education in all the countries of the Asian region. However, the recent trends in many of the Asian countries show the need for basing educational planning in its broader context in order to respond effectively to the future changes. This will necessitate a shift from the traditional quantitative orientation of the educational-planning process. The planning approach needs to be based on a sensitive awareness of the social situation and the needs and aspirations of the people, and of the multiple objectives of the educational process including qualitative development of education.

These developments must be seen in conjunction with the marked trend in the Asian countries towards decentralization within a unified national policy. Essential to the planning approach is the active participation of a wide range of public representatives in the planning and implementation processes as well as in delineating the long-term perspectives for the development of education in harmony with the goals of the society that each country wishes to evolve.

The future of educational planning in Asia depends on its links with educational reforms. Educational reforms introduce educational changes in relation to the broader objectives of societal changes; educational planning translates these objectives into operational strategies. Following from this the role of educational planning will change according to the nature of educational reforms. When educational reform is a process of *incremental changes* the role of educational planning is to facilitate changes in the set of elements to make the system function efficiently and effectively. When educational reforms are *comprehensive*, educational planning has a supportive role in the identification of key elements for decision-making and in

1. National Council on Educational Reform, *Reports on educational reform*, Tokyo, Government of Japan, 1987.

converting these decisions into action plans. Where educational planning is also broad-based and directly concerned with issues of social and qualitative changes, the educational-planning process is integrated with educational reforms, strengthening both the reform and the planning processes.

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The book

This booklet is an observer's personal account of the role and functioning of educational planning in Asia.

Though countries in the region have long traditions in education, educational planning is a relatively recent phenomenon—consequent upon the adoption of planning as a basic framework for economic and social development during the past three decades. Yet educational planning has already become a vital tool in the development of institutional mechanisms and administrative structures, thereby facilitating the unprecedented quantitative expansion of education.

Based on his wide-ranging experience and involvement in the development of the educational planning process in the countries of the region, the author describes the beginnings, the changing priorities, and the new directions of educational planning in Asia.

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